AMTA Membership 1943-1987

In this year of the membership drive, it is interesting to look back through AMTA history to see how the organization has grown through the years. The AMTA has grown in numbers and types of members to its present state of 6,000 members and five membership categories. Today members are designated as Active, Honorary, Associate, Student, Auxiliary or International. The chart below shows the total membership for each year and the numbers within each category, except the International category which was created just this year.

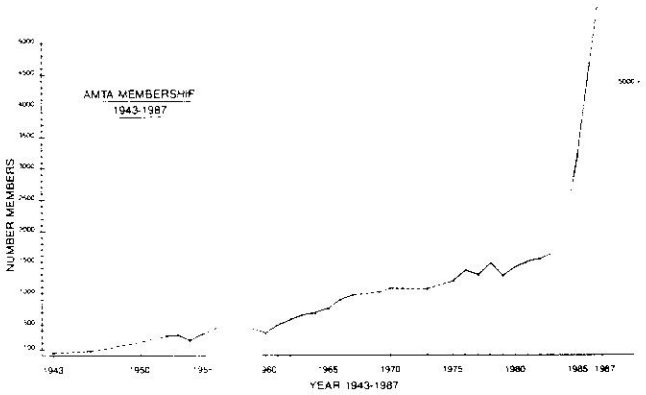
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION CHART*
AMERICAN MASSAGE THERAPY ASSOCIATION
1943-1987

YEAR	TOTAL	ACTIVE	HONORARY	ASSOCIATE	STUDENT	AUXILIARY
1943	29	29				
1944						
1945						
1946	68	68				
1947						
1948						
1949						
1950						
1951						
1952	272	268	4			
1953	285	284	1			
1954	205	204	1			
1955	296	294	2			
1956	399	395	0	4		
1957	433	429	3	1		
1958	412	407	5	0		
1959	400	397	3	0		
1960	359	357	1	1		
1961	420	416	4	0		
1962	541	538	3	0		
1963	629	617	12	0		
1964	664	652	12	0		
1965	730	715	12	3		
1966	858	832	12	2	12	
1967	921	880	14	11	16	
1968						
1969	985	937	10	12	26	
1970	1051	975	18	14	44	
1971						
1972						
1973	1032	906	17	29	68	12
1974						
1975	1167	1018	15	42	58	34
1976	1320	1038	16	75	136	55
1977	1265	971	14	92	119	69
1978	1428	1089	19	100	153	67
1979	1260	923	19	99	132	84
1980	1405	1068	15	109	135	78
1981	1435	1025	13	137	139	121
1982	1474	1074	13	129	141	117
1983	1584	1200	13	122	123	126
1984	2042	1616	17	129	155	125
1985	3182	2665	21	160	200	135
1986	4644	3884	17	204	441	98
1987						

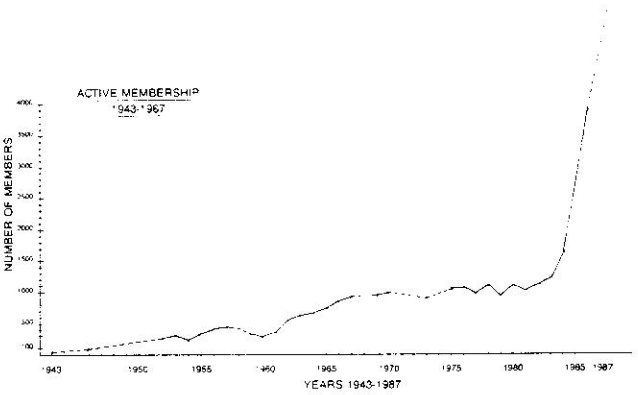
*Membership information was not available for 1944-45, 1947-51, 1968, 1971-72 and 1974.

The organization as a whole had experienced a rather steady increase in members from 1943 to 1983 with a phenomenal upsurge in numbers in the last four years. The following graph illustrates how steady the growth had been up to 1983 and how dramatic the increase has become with no leveling off in sight.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

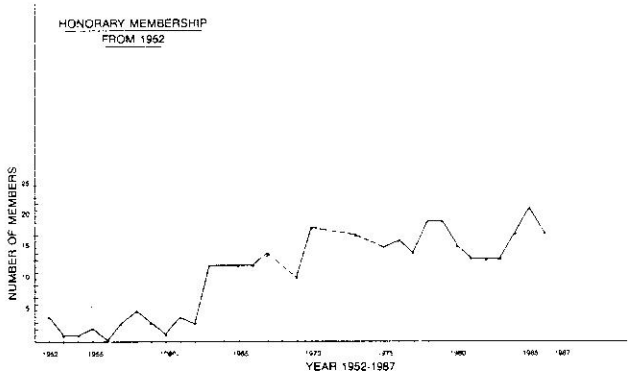


The American Association of Masseurs and Masseuses was founded in 1943 with 29 members. All of these founding members were from a post graduate class of the College of Swedish Massage in Chicago and were most likely actively engaged in massage work. Dues were 50¢.

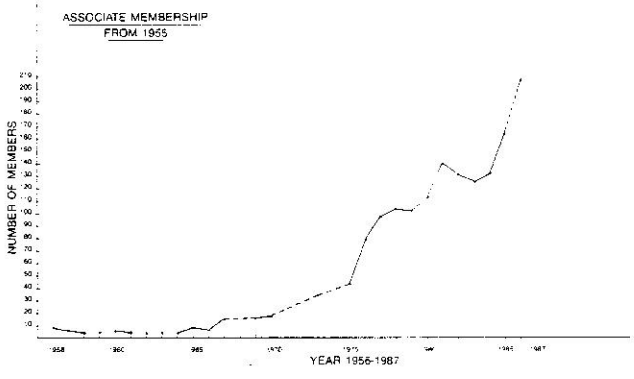


The first Constitution and By-Laws were adopted in 1946, but the oldest copy of an AAMM Constitution in the AMTA Archives is from 1958. By 1958 there were two membership categories, Active and Honorary, and dues for Active Members were $24. Qualifications for Active Members read as follows:

Any person who is actively engaged in or about to engage in the practice of modern and/or Swedish Massage, and/or physical therapy, who has graduated from an A.A.M.M. approved school or college (which gives a final examination and a diploma or certificate upon graduation), is eligible for membership in this Association, provided his or her application is accompanied by the stated fee and dues, is sponsored by an active member, and is approved by the State Chapter, or the National Board of Directors in unorganized states.



Honorary membership in 1958 was either for life, which was granted "to those who have rendered outstanding service to the Association," or granted from year to year to worthy members, and conferred by 2/3 vote of members in convention. In 1986, Honorary membership was designated as "a special honor bestowed upon a person who has given exemplary services and/or knowledge toward the continued betterment of massage." Because of the nature of this category, numbers in it have always been low, recently varying from about 13 to 20 members.

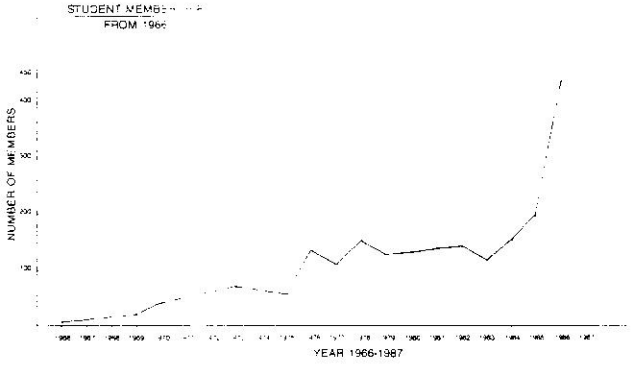


Associate Membership. Although there were Associate members listed in the official Registry and Yearbook starting in 1956, this category did not appear in the Constitution until 1961. Associate member qualifications for 1961 read as follows:

> Associate members shall consist of practitioners of the other healing arts, allied and sympathetic to our cause, those operating schools and colleges in natural therapeutics and related professions, and business firms in various modalities, apparatus and equipment used in massage and physical therapy practice. Provisions are made for members retiring from the profession to become Associate members and to continue to enjoy its many advantages and our mutual interest.

It appears that there was some problem in admitting members of other healing arts to the organization, and in 1967, the category of Associate member was limited to "Inactive, former, or retired members." And, for a brief time, a clause prohibiting practicing chiropractic physicians working under a state license from AMTA membership is found in the Constitution (1969-1971). Chiropractors were allowed to join the AMTA if they did not have a state chiropractic license, and they qualified in massage training according to the AMTA standards at that time.

Today Associate membership is reserved for "Active members, now retired from the massage profession."



Student Membership. Student membership was added in 1966 and was for "those individuals who are currently preparing themselves for entering the practice of massage, at an approved AMTA school, and who desire the benefits and advantages of belonging to a national organization." The Student category experienced steady growth from a beginning of 12 students through 1985 when the increase in student members sky-rocketed along with the general membership.

In 1976, Student membership eligibility was changed so that those studying massage therapy in areas without an approved school could enroll in a "Chapter Educa-

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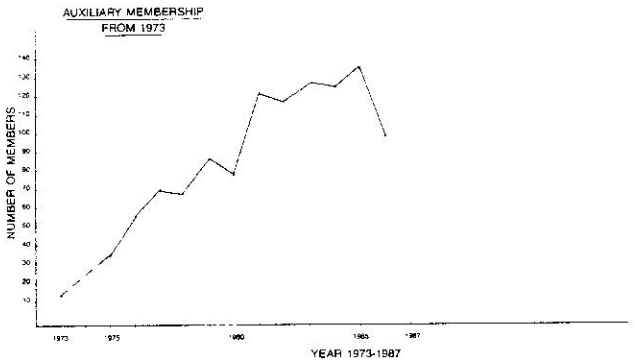
tion Program with credit hour program," and qualify for Student membership. There was a big jump in student membership at that time, the category growing from 58 members in 1975 to 136 members in 1976. That was the largest yearly increase in student membership until the 1983 surge, which is probably the result of an increase in AMTA approved schools.

In 1987, a Student member who is not in an AMTA approved school must be in an educational program approved by the National and State Education Directors. There is a move to go back to original Student membership eligibility, and limit such membership to those enrolled in AMTA curriculum approved schools. An amendment to that effect was recently defeated at the 1987 Convention in Chicago.



Auxiliary Membership. By 1973, an Auxiliary membership category was created for "any person...interested in promoting and assisting Chapters in any worthwhile manner or projects as approved by the Chapter Officers." These members have no vote, and cannot hold office, but may be assigned to assist committees.

The Auxiliary membership has grown from a beginning of 12 members in 1973 to about 100 in 1986. This category has not changed substantially since 1973, and today is reserved for those "not practicing massage or a like profession, but...interested in promoting massage and assisting State Chapters in projects approved by Chapter Officers, or in any other worthwhile manner."

Changes in Qualifications for Active Membership. Qualifications for Active membership up through 1961 required being actively engaged in massage practice, as well as graduating from an AMTA approved school. At that time, a provision was added to open membership to those who had either apprenticed or learned massage practice in the field. The 1961 Constitution amended the Active member qualifications by adding "or in lieu thereof, has had at least two years of active practice in Massage Therapy and vouched for by an Active member." After a four year steady decline in Active membership, this seems to have initiated a consistent increase over the next several years.

For a brief time in the early 1970's, Active membership eligibility was again limited to those graduating from AMTA approved schools. Then in 1973, three different types of qualification were recognized.

1. Any graduate of an AMTA approved massage school.

2. A graduate from a non-approved massage school who passes an examination approved by the AMTA and administered by the State Chapter.

3. Any person who has been in an established massage business for not less than 3 years using therapeutic massage who passes an examination approved by the AMTA and administered by the State Chapter.

Requirements stayed substantially the same through the 1970's, but by 1980 clauses were added to include "any person showing proof of training from a designated AMTA Certified Instructor and passing an AMTA approved examination," and "any person passing both a written and practical examination making a minimum grade of seventy-five per cent (75%) on each part." Applicants for membership had to be sponsored by an AMTA member in good standing and endorsed by two State and/or National officers. Two character references were also required.

By 1986, qualifications were simplified and only two types of Active members were designated.

1. Graduate from an AMTA curriculum-approved school within the previous two years.
2. All other applicants must pass both a written and practical examination administered per AMTA guidelines with a minimum grade of 75% on each part.

In 1986, applicants must also be sponsored by an AMTA member in good standing, submit letters of reference from two active AMTA members, and be endorsed by two State or National Officers.

International Membership. In 1987 the AMTA officially added an International category of membership. Prior to this time, the AMTA did have members outside of the United States, but simply gave them Active member status. Canada has been represented in the

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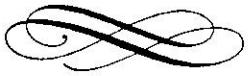
National Historian's Report...

AMTA from the very early years. Other countries and U.S. territories found in the AMTA through the years have included: Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Japan, England, Bermuda, Germany, West Indies, Malta, Peru, and Venezuela.

Through the institution of the special International category, the AMTA officially welcomes massage therapists from around the world.

Patricia J. Benjamin
National Historian
Illinois



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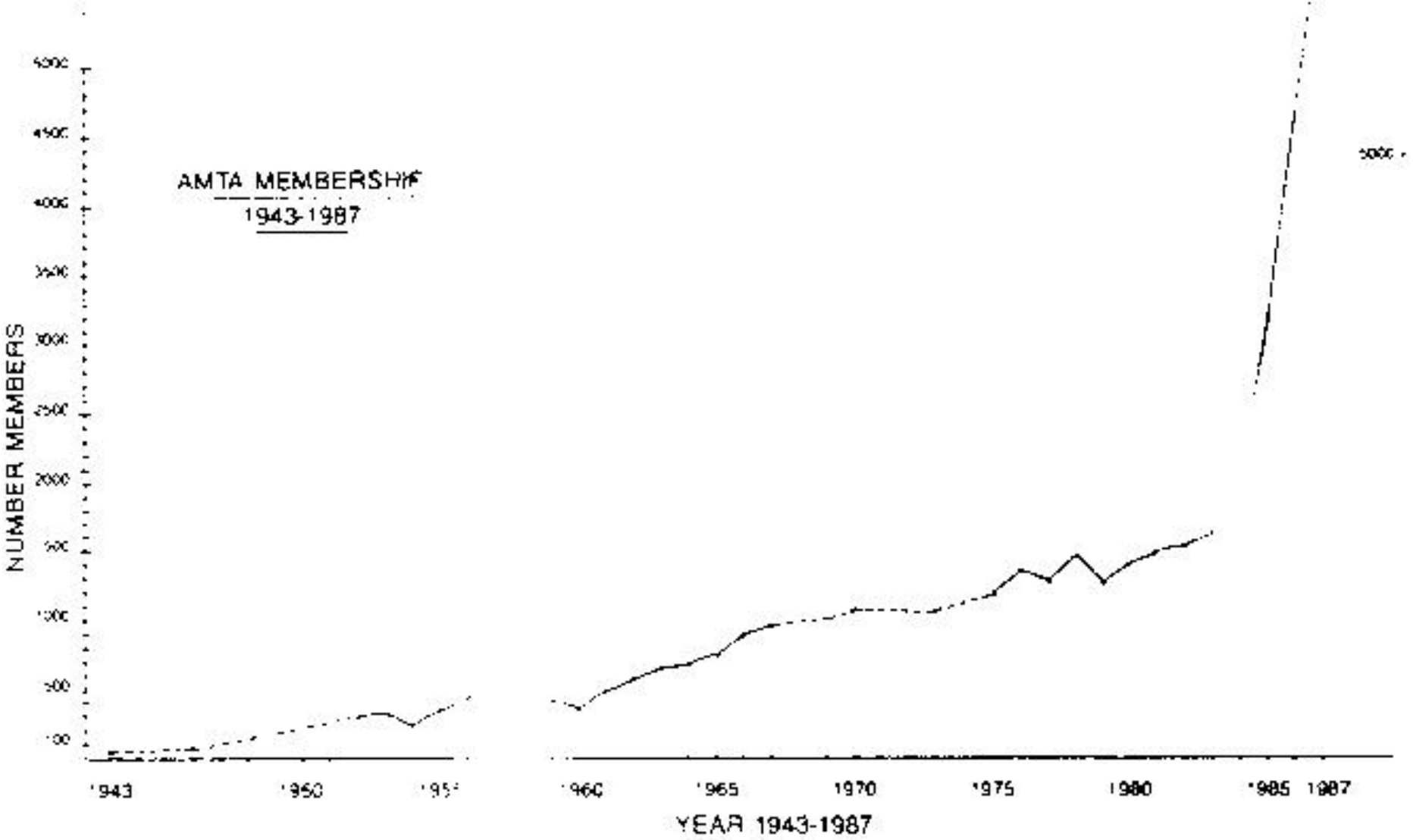
AMTA MEMBERSHIP
1943-1987
NUMBER MEMBERS
5000
1943
1950
1960
1965
1970
1975
1980
1985
1987
YEAR 1943-1987